Frontier Radio

Station Dedication

March 17, 1999

History of WMSE

March 17, 1999, marks the 18th anniversary of WMSE-FM. It's history actually goes back to September of 1922 when WIAO made its first broadcast over the air. An AM station with 100 watts of power, WIAO was one of the first radio stations to operate in the Milwaukee area. Built and operated by MSOE, its main function was to train students in the design and operation of wireless broadcast and receiver systems that Marconi patented only 25 years earlier.

In the late 70s and early 80s, a faint signal, less than one watt, came from a church adjacent to MSOE. WSOE, a student-operated station began broadcasting alternative music to Milwaukee. The Radio Broadcasters Club proposed that MSOE should pursue the acquisition of an educational FM license.

In 1981, Everett Cobb, an MSOE alumnus and Milwaukee radio pioneer who owned a small chain of out-of-state stations, donated $30,000 to MSOE for the station to increase the signal and acquire the license. Students built a new studio from scratch, refurbishing cast-off equipment into a functioning beacon for their university. The station was given the call letters WMSE (91.7 FM) and FCC permission to operate at 1,000 watts. It become a force to be reckoned with in the city.

In 1982 and 1983, WMSE won Milwaukee Journal readers' polls for most popular radio station; a "Best Radio Station" WAMI Award in 1987, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1997; Milwaukee Magazine's "Best Of" Award in 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1989; and "Best Radio Station" in the Shepherd Express "Readers Poll" for five consecutive years (1993-97).

WMSE's power upgrade in March 1995 boosted its signal from 1,000 to more than 3,200 watts.

Through its unpaid air personalities and hundreds of other volunteers, private donations and underwriting, WMSE continues to be the Milwaukee station that gives listeners the opportunity to hear programming they are unlikely to hear on other stations.

Program

Gathering of Guests

Welcome
Tom Crawford, General Manager, WMSE

History of WMSE
Frank Habib, Vice President of Development, MSOE

Recognition of Special Guests
Hermann Viets, Ph.D., President, MSOE

Recognition of Volunteers
Frank Habib

Remarks From Special Guests
Tom Ament, Milwaukee County Executive
John Norquist, City of Milwaukee Mayor

Tape Cutting and Official Dedication
Hermann Viets, Ph.D.
Tom Crawford
Special Guests

"Drop the Needle" on the First Record
John Norquist

Closing Remarks
Frank Habib

In 1903, Milwaukee School of Engineering was founded in the spirit of partnership between the university and business and industry. That cooperation remains the foundation of its work today.

In gratitude, MSOE extends its deepest appreciation to the following individuals and corporations for their generous contributions to the construction and renovation for the new home of WMSE 91.7FM.

Clean Brite
Andre Bosseau

Custom Structural Inc.
Dan Minor

Great Lake Builders
Mike Peters

KKE Architects
Don Curwick
Greg Hollenkamp

Klein-Dickert Milwaukee Inc.
Mark Wanzer

Kohl's Department Store
Noble Heller
Natalie Martin
Monica Birkholz

Kohnke Hanneken Inc.
Dave Hanneken
Denise Kohnke
Rich Kohnke
Darlene Stimac

Schliess Floor Coverings
Bill Schliess
Tim Daul

Staff Electric Co. Inc.
Dave Hill
Karl Jaeger

Structural Systems Corp.
Eugene Gawryleski '73

TJ Hale Co.
Earl Mullins
Jack Hale

Thomas and Egenhoefer Inc.
Reggie Thomas

In recent years, the WMSE family has been saddened by the loss of several close friends. While we miss their presence both on the air and in our midst, we remember them and carry their spirit with us each day.

Bob Betts, WMSE General Manager
Doug Goldman, WMSE Volunteer DJ
Mark Schneider, WMSE Volunteer DJ

Since the beginning, WMSE 91.7 FM has been guided by a strong and energetic group of volunteers. A similarly loyal cadre of people has anchored this renovation project. While we wish we could name them individually, we recognize their pursuit of excellence here and thank them for their commitment to our radio station.

MSOE

WMSE 91.7 FM
Milwaukee School of Engineering
www.msoe.edu

91.7 WMSE